

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 5 with the following:

Each of the operations shown in FIG. 4 will be described in further detail below.

Firstly, the line fitting in step ~~[[S2]]~~ S42 will be explained. FIG. 5 explains the conventional line fitting, in which FIGS. 5A to 5C show the steps of line fitting, respectively. First, a line (string) 431 connecting both ends 430 a and 430 b of a given group of data points 430 is generated as shown in FIG. 5A. Then, the data point group is searched for a data point whose distance to the generated line 431 is largest. In case the distance d between a data point 430c thus searched and line 431 exceeds a threshold, the line 431 is segmented. More specifically, the line 431 is segmented into a line 431 a connecting the left end point 430a and data point 430c which is a break point, and a line 431b connecting the break point 430c and right end point 430b as shown in FIG. 5B. The segmentation is repeatedly done until the distance between all these points and lines becomes smaller than a threshold, whereby a plurality of lines fit to given data can be extracted. In this embodiment, the data points 430c and 430d which are finally break points at two places are selected as shown in FIG. 5C, and the line 431 is segmented into three lines 431a, 431c and 431d.